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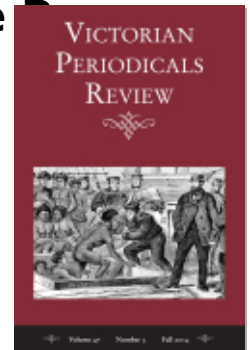
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Periodicity, Time Travel, and the Emergence of Science Fiction: H. G. Wells's Temporal Adventures in the *Victorian Periodicals Review*

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Periodicity, Time Travel, and the Emergence of Science Fiction: H. G. Wells's Temporal Adventures in the Pages of the *New Review*

WILL TATTERSDILL

The depth of the relationship between periodicals and the form of writing which would eventually become known as science fiction is well acknowledged.¹ Scholars in periodical studies, meanwhile, are used to the idea that Victorian novels can be read differently and teach us new things when encountered in their original magazine contexts.² However, discussions of late Victorian science fiction, of which the focus is nearly always H. G. Wells's "scientific romances," seldom combine these two propositions by approaching sources in their periodical incarnations.³ This is unfortunate from a biographical perspective: David C. Smith's recently published bibliography of Wells's journalism shows afresh the scale of his involvement with the press.⁴ It is also unfortunate, though, from the standpoint of anybody interested in the mechanics of the broader relationship between periodicals and their constitutive discourses, for considering early science fiction works in their periodical contexts can teach us much about the emergence and development of this genre of popular writing.

When it finally gained a corporate identity in the form of *Amazing Stories* (1926–), the first English-language periodical dedicated exclusively to science fiction, "scientifiction" (as it was at first known) was an absolute testimony to the importance of magazines in "establishing the popular categories of fiction."⁵ Not only was *Amazing Stories* itself a periodical, but its first issues contained reprints exclusively, nearly all of which had themselves been written for earlier magazines. The oldest story in *Amazing Stories*'s first issue, Edgar Allan Poe's "The Facts in the Case of Mr. Valdemar," originally appeared in the *American Magazine and Broadway Journal* in December 1845; the most recent, G. Peyton Wertenbaker's "The

Man From the Atom,” was from a 1923 issue of *Science and Invention*. Wells was represented by his story “The New Accelerator,” which had been printed in the December 1901 issue of the *Strand Magazine*. Of the other three pieces in the issue, only one had been published in a non-periodical context: the first part of Jules Verne’s serialized novel *Off on a Comet*, which had arrived in book form, translated from the French, in 1877. The first point to note from all of this is that magazines provided a corpus for the new commercial entity of science fiction as well as a vehicle by which it could be advanced to the public. The second point is that it worked: Verne, Wells, and Poe are still the go-to examples of science fiction’s nineteenth-century forefathers.⁶

There are numerous other convincing explanations for the effectiveness of the partnership between periodicals and the nascent genre of science fiction. It is important, for instance, to consider the environment created by the rapid technological changes of the 1880s and 1890s and their effects on readership, leisure time, transport, printing, distribution, and the wider imaginative climate.⁷ Both science fiction and popular magazines were products of this environment, and both, in their different ways, contributed to its development. In this article, though, I want to focus on a rather more esoteric characteristic which proved to be an equally crucial component of the successful collaboration between literary form and physical format: temporality. It is my contention that there is a synergy between the ways in which science fiction and periodicals treat time and that apprehending this characteristic deepens our understanding of the relationship between a genre and its medium. The idea that temporality might illuminate links between magazines and science fiction has been hinted at in these pages before, but in this article, I propose to engage with this topic more directly.⁸ I focus on Wells’s *The Time Machine* firstly because it is a familiar text for most readers, secondly because its time-travel plot usefully evinces temporal anxieties on a narrative level, and finally because it represents a watershed moment in the development of what would become science fiction, the first and still “default version” of the time-travel story.⁹ I will argue that structural affinities between *The Time Machine* and its periodical setting are also shared, to an extent, by science itself. Resisting the traditionally conceived two-culture divide, I will draw harmonizing links between the attitudes towards time present in both literature and science, in particular the temporally dependant quality of suspense. Given the continued public (and academic) exchanges on the fraught relationship between literature and science, these links are perhaps the most exciting reason to study early science fiction in Victorian periodicals.

W. E. Henley published the opening instalment of *The Time Machine* in the first issue of his controversy-ridden editorship of the monthly *New Review* (1889–97) in January 1895. The serial, which ran until May of the

same year, was the first in English to feature deliberate travel through time with a machine designed especially for the purpose.¹⁰ Previous visions of the future had relied on dreams, unexplained cryostasis, or mystical teleportation in order to move people, typically somewhat to their surprise, between time periods.¹¹ One of *The Time Machine*'s innovations, then, was that it bestowed temporal agency on its voyaging protagonist, a character who is never referred to as anything other than "The Time Traveller."

Since the Time Traveller himself narrates the bulk of the text, it is easy to overlook the second narrator, who relays the tale as it is heard at one of the Time Traveller's social gatherings. The reader of the *New Review* is not the Time Traveller's proximate audience; in fact, the novel is the archetype of what John Clute has called a "club story," each detail reaching us second hand through a supposedly passive interlocutor.¹² This interlocutor, also unnamed in the text, is a regular guest during the Time Traveller's evening soirees, which are an eagerly awaited part of his weekly calendar. Here, then, is the first structural similarity between *The Time Machine* and the periodical: the core idea of seriality, of a similar-but-different installment awaiting a definite future moment (and anticipated by definite past moments).¹³

The Time Traveller's Thursday night gatherings echo more than just the structure of the periodical. The audience to which he addresses himself includes a poet, psychologist, doctor, rector, editor, and journalist—a mixed crowd whose members are also, when the Time Traveller isn't speaking, contributors to a mixed discussion. "At first the conversation was mere fragmentary chatter, with some local *lacunae* of digestive silence," says the narrator, describing a typical occasion, "but towards nine or half-past nine, if the God was favourable, some particular topic would triumph by a kind of natural selection, and would become the common interest."¹⁴ This harmonisation of polyphonic discourse is something that the narrator always looks forward to: "The arrival of that moment of fusion, when our several conversations were suddenly merged into a general discussion, was a great relief to me."¹⁵ It is easy to read this crowd as representative of the *New Review*'s target audience: respectable and learned individuals, all male, meeting in the service of general intellectual discussion. Such discussion echoes the intended mix of discourses in a periodical which "aimed to be a critical journal on 'Politics, Science, and Art.'"¹⁶ Providing the venue for unification of diverse specialities into a harmonious event, just as the space of the magazine does, the Time Traveller is described on the first page of the serial as a capable editor-figure, a "vivid and variegated talker" whose "fantastic, often paradoxical, conceptions came so close as to form one continuous discourse."¹⁷ Part of his intent as a host is simply bringing his various guests into contact with each other, just as the contents page of a magazine brought together writers on a host of diverse subjects, including,

in the month *The Time Machine* started its run, "The Navy," "The New Ibsen," "An Eulogy of Charles the Second," and "India: Impressions."¹⁸

The Time Traveller's weekly meetings, then, blend the discursive possibilities of the magazine with its serial reappearance. The particularity of this effect to the periodical is underscored by the fact that in the book version of *The Time Machine*, this aspect of the narrative is significantly de-emphasised: the book begins promptly with the Time Traveller's pronouncement of his theories about space and time, and the prefatory description of their discursive context, some of which I have just quoted, is now almost entirely absent.¹⁹ However, something of the periodical has lingered into the book form as well, for the Time Traveller's theories themselves, the science fiction principles which underpin the entire story, betray a link between the novel's original form and its content. The Time Traveller's arguments about the possibility of travel through time conceived as the fourth dimension are something with which modern readers, even those not versed in science fiction, will probably feel comfortable. The dinner party guest/reader is invited to consider an imaginary omniscient observer outside the flow of time who would regard both past and future as directions and who would therefore need to conceptualise physical objects as having an extra dimension of existence: "An ordinary man, being asked to describe this box, would say, among other things, that it was in such a position, and that it measured ten inches in depth, say, three in breadth, and four in length. From the absolute point of view it would also be necessary to say that it began at such a moment, lasted so long, measured so much in time, and was moved here and there meanwhile."²⁰ In order to be comprehensively understood, an object must have both its physical and temporal dimensions recorded. This is how we are asked to understand magazines, based on the numbers and dates encoded on their covers: while bibliographers might be interested in the physical dimensions of an issue, most indexes are primarily concerned with a title's duration, changes of publisher, and so on, exactly in keeping with the Time Traveller's stipulations. With the digitization of periodicals, the more traditional first three dimensions are further diminished in stature. *The New Review's* page on ProQuest's *British Periodicals* database, for example, exclusively contains temporal information.

The fact that fourth-dimensionality is built into the format of the periodical is one of the main conceptual properties separating it from the book.²¹ A useful metaphor for this difference emerges in a contemporary review of Wells's novel written by Israel Zangwill which appeared in the *Pall Mall Magazine* four months after *The Time Machine* came to a conclusion. In the review, Zangwill conceives time as a "vast *continuum* holding all that has happened and all that will happen, an eternal Present," adding that "there is really more difficulty in understanding the Present than the Past

or the Future into which it is always slipping.”²² In the course of his speculations, Zangwill suggests another kind of time machine based on the slow speed of light: “We could travel to any given year by travelling actually through space to the point at which the rays of that year would first strike upon our consciousness.”²³ This time machine also recasts time as space but, unlike Wells’s, does not permit the traveller the “fallacy of mingling personally in the panorama.”²⁴ A user of Zangwill’s machine can only ever be an observer, travelling forwards and backwards by moving physically closer to or further away from the object of study. On the library shelf, periodical time is stratified by distance in the same way although it is only possible to travel backwards from the present.

The Time Traveller, of course, goes forward. When he does, he leaves behind the comfortable Victorian domesticity of which the periodical is a cornerstone. *The Time Machine* is frequently read as an evolutionary fable, a nightmare of the possibility of human degeneration.²⁵ One of the most disturbing things about 802,701 AD, the year in which the Time Traveller finds himself, is that there are no books; everything learned and written by civilised society has proved transitory. I want to add to this straightforward observation the idea that a troubling lack of *periodicity* also resounds throughout the future lands which the Time Traveller visits, adding what might be described as an ideological dimension to the structural relationship described above.

The land of the Morlocks and Eloi not only lacks newspapers and magazines but also bears no trace of the structured time which periodicals both reflect and reinforce. The Eloi’s life patterns are governed not by calendars and clocks but by the moon, the waning and waxing of which increases and decreases the likelihood of a Morlock attack. Periodicity has regressed to natural rhythms, and the Time Traveller turns to these for reassurance when he finds himself feeling isolated in the blank time of this uncomfortable future. Gazing at the stars, he says, “I thought of their unfathomable distance, and the slow inevitable drift of their movements out of the unknown past into the unknown future.”²⁶ In the same passage, he also contemplates the unimaginably slow (from a human perspective) yet suddenly homely-seeming revolution of the Earth’s magnetic field: “I thought of the great processional cycle that the pole of the earth describes. Only forty times had that silent revolution occurred during all the years that I had traversed.”²⁷

Consolation, then, comes by reaching towards nature for some evidence of consistent rhythms over time. However, this consolation fades when the Time Traveller voyages farther still into the future after his adventures with the Morlocks and Eloi, reaching a point where even natural periodicity has come to an end: “The alterations of day and night grew slower and slower, and so did the passage of the sun across the sky, until they seemed to stretch

through centuries. At last a steady twilight brooded over the earth.”²⁸ This nightmarish far-future, in which the Earth’s rotation has ceased and the sun has become stationary, is the end of periodicity—and implicitly, given entropy, the end of time itself, for how does one measure time if nothing changes? It is therefore unsurprising that when the Time Traveller returns to 1895 a few pages later, he instinctively looks to periodicity to reassure himself that he is home: “I saw *The Pall Mall Gazette* on the table by the door. I found the date was indeed today, and looking at the timepiece, saw the hour was almost eight o’clock.”²⁹ Coming upon the clock and the copy of the *Pall Mall Gazette* is disjuncting even for a twenty-first-century reader who, just paragraphs earlier, has been witnessing the fixed sun over a dying Earth. This effect is, of course, deliberate. The clock and the magazine are important not just for the specific information of time and date which they convey but for the very fact of their existence: they provide an elemental reassurance that the Time Traveller has returned to a structured, comprehensible age. This is literally home territory for Wells, since the *Pall Mall Gazette* was an important outlet in his early publishing career.³⁰

Further evidence of how deeply enmeshed Wells’s 1895 society is in the rhythms of print culture can be seen in the final sequence during which the narrator, having described both the Time Traveller’s story and the incredulous reaction it receives from his respectable gathering, waits (in vain, as it will turn out) for the scientist to emerge from his laboratory. The Time Traveller is embarking on another voyage and has promised, after his failure to convince his guests, to return with proof that his machine works: “I heard the door of the laboratory slam, seated myself in a chair, and took up a daily paper. What was he going to do before lunch time? Then suddenly I was reminded by an advertisement that I had promised to meet Richardson, the publisher, at two. I looked at my watch, and saw that I could barely save that engagement.”³¹ This passage is saturated with words that emphasise and re-emphasise the dependency of the present on regulated time (“daily paper,” “lunch time,” “advertisement,” “publisher,” “two,” “watch,” “engagement”), especially when contrasted to the unregulated time of the barren landscape from which the Time Traveller and his readers have recently returned. The phrase “daily paper,” first and foremost, engulfs the reader in a serial society: they are now reading about someone in a periodical reading a periodical. *The Time Machine* idealises the regulated time which magazines like the *New Review* so well embodied. There is yet another sense, closely linked to temporality, in which the Time Traveller has an affinity with the periodical: the fact that above all else, he is at heart a scientist. I do not refer here to his actual credentials, which are masked by the narrator in a rather hollow gesture towards anonymity, nor even to the fact that the Time Traveller himself devises the machine which will project him into the future; rather,

I mean to highlight a particular mindset, the attitude the Time Traveller brings to the situations in which he finds himself. Whilst he sometimes resembles Allan Quatermain (intrepid, honourable, and tenacious), Wells's hero is more researcher than adventurer. However, when considering late Victorian tales of derring-do, it is of course unwise to draw a firm distinction between the two. His cerebral reactions to dangerous situations and problems, his ability to fend for himself in the hostile environment of the far future, and his lengthy disquisitions on and hypotheses of the world in which he finds himself are all attempts at (if not textbook examples of) Victorian empiricism, a fact best attested to by his willingness to admit his own mistakes and come to new conclusions in the light of fresh evidence. I have already mentioned that Wells's was the first narrative wherein time travel is the result of a deliberate process of research and experiment created from a hypothetically reasoned theory about the world. It is also worth dwelling on the fact that unlike many of the inventions in the "mad scientist" tales that would continue to gain popularity in the 1890s, the time machine actually works. In fact, it never stops working except by its inventor's own design. This is not a Frankenstein story: the hubris of scientific ambition often identified as a common theme in science fiction (thanks in part to the prominence of tales like Wells's later *The Island of Doctor Moreau*) is not something this novel is interested in exploring.

Given Wells's scientific training and interests, a certain degree of optimism about empirical science is unsurprising.³² The Time Traveller's scientific qualifications and activities, though, gesture at a temporally dependant quality which the periodical incorporates into its very structure: suspense. It goes without saying that one of the differences between encountering *The Time Machine* in its original run in the *New Review* and reading it today in Penguin paperback is that the reader is temporally obstructed from the ending; the speed at which the reader experiences the story depends on the publication interval of the magazine in which it appears (monthly, in the case of the *New Review*). This, combined with a lack of cultural pre-awareness of where the story was going or of the personality and interests of its author, would have made that first encounter with an almost unknown novelist a very distant experience from that of the novel's twenty-first-century readers.³³ It is significant to my argument here that the two things that function to create this distance are time and the periodical format. Yet what has any of this to do with the scientific mindset? Caroline Levine answers this question in her critical work *The Serious Pleasures of Suspense* (2003). Identifying suspense as the crucial characteristic of literary realism, Levine argues that rather than purporting to precisely depict the real world, as has since been assumed, Victorian realism invited readers to get a sense of the world's otherness by distancing themselves from their assumptions, a method drawn, she says, from post-Enlightenment science.

"In order to grasp the fundamental alterity of the world," Levine contends, "it was necessary to put aside one's own intellectual habits and presumptions. . . . Realism came to mean the suspending of assumption and belief, and narrative suspense emerged as the realist strategy par excellence."³⁴

For Levine, the suspenseful pause is a place of earnest contemplation and reflection in which the reader, like a scientist or the protagonist of a novel, is introduced "to the activity of hypothesizing and testing in order to come to knowledge."³⁵ This is certainly what the Time Traveller does as he uses his first days among the Eloi to speculate as to the causes of the society he witnesses, carefully laying out his own false assumptions and the processes by which he came to revise them. It is also the activity of the readers approaching the tale in instalments, piecing together the elements of the narrative they have in order to speculate about the whole and, in the process, speculate about the more abstract scientific ideas which Wells is setting forth.³⁶ Despite suggesting that many critics of Victorian realism "have been inclined to forget what it is like to read Victorian novels *for the first time*," losing sight of their suspenseful qualities because the plots of canonical novels are now common knowledge, Levine barely mentions periodicals at all.³⁷ This is unfortunate since the suspenseful pause on which so much of her argument is based is literally enacted by the periodical as a temporal function. With her focus on realism, particularly canonical writings from Ruskin to Wilde, Levine also bypasses science fiction. Though perhaps more understandable, this omission is still a shame given the crossover between her idea that suspense encourages active readerly hypothesis and contemplation and Darko Suvin's famous identification of science fiction as the literature of "cognitive estrangement" in which the very distance of science fiction's imagined worlds is seen as a way of inviting consideration of ours.³⁸ Understood this way, science fiction's imaginative objectives look very similar to those of Levine's realism.

What I am suggesting here is that Levine's ideas can be readily extended to accommodate works from outside the tradition of Victorian realism on which she focuses, even outside the format of the book, which is her first point of contact. Science and suspense are continuous bedfellows in *The Time Machine*. The Time Traveller's first experiment, conducted in front of a group which is not only a broad and educated periodical demographic but also a mixed group of sceptical peers, involves a small working model of the finished time machine. From this, the group proceeds to test the full-size machine, but only after the model has been shown in action. "And now I must be explicit," begins the narrator, prefacing his long description of the machine itself, "for this that follows—unless his explanation is to be accepted—is an absolutely unaccountable thing."³⁹ He understands that his account is not just a story but witness testimony to an experiment, and his thoroughness therefore satisfies the twin requirements of science (by

its exhaustive descriptions) and suspense (through the delay in narrative action which those descriptions occasion).

Science and the realist narrative are, for Levine, united by the fact that in each “as we wait, suspended, to see whether or not the future will bear out our suppositions and desires, we experience a vital, vibrant *pleasure*.”⁴⁰ The periodical has more in common with science, though, than its structural affinity with the experiment. Just as it is no coincidence that science fiction and the periodical have such entwined histories, scientific progress has been allied to the journal since at least the establishment of the *Philosophical Transactions* (1665–). The serial qualities of the periodical complement the core understanding that science is only ever the best *current* explanation of the world, an always-completing process of understanding rather than a pre-existing body of knowledge. As two present-day popularisers have put it, “In science, there are no universal truths, just views of the world that have yet to be shown to be false. All we can say for certain is that, for now, Einstein’s theory works.”⁴¹ The periodical’s form bestows upon it a special capacity for self-revision as each issue implicitly alters the tense of its predecessor from present to past. Perhaps this aspect of its temporality partially explains why the journal article, rather than, say, the monograph, is the dominant written form of academic science.

Science fiction, science, and the periodical are all, in their different ways, *ongoing* projects. Whilst their varied participants might have different ways of engaging with time, their common interest in presentness can still be seen in their joint reluctance to draw a line under things, to declare them finished. Science, as I have just mentioned, is often regarded as a potentially infinite fine-tuning process in which even the most firmly held orthodoxies remain theoretically open for revision. The nightmare of the periodical, meanwhile, is the world in which the promise of regular future issues, made implicit in the volume and issue numbers on every cover, is broken. Many science fiction stories also disavow finite conclusions, and *The Time Machine* is no exception. In the closing passage, the narrator admits he does not know how the Time Traveller’s journey ends, but there is also a reluctance, characteristic of a club story, to provide the audience with definitive affirmation that any part of the story was true. Indeed, the former is spurred by the latter, for it is his inability to convince his guests that prompts the Time Traveller to set out on the final voyage from which he never returns. Underscoring all this is the fact that the Time Traveller himself urges his audience to disbelieve him: “Take it as a lie—or a prophecy. Say I dreamed it in the workshop. Consider I have been speculating upon the destinies of our race, until I have hatched this fiction. Treat my assertion of the truth as a mere stroke of art to enhance its interest. And taking it as a story, what do you think of it?”⁴² Cannily, Wells speaks directly to the *New Review*’s readers in this passage, inviting them with

this realist gesture (for the narrative *is* fictitious and everyone knows that) into active, Levine-like, and perhaps even scientific speculation about the intellectual implications of his story.

As I close, I should confess that the particular traits of science and the periodical on which I have dwelt do not map as conveniently onto all of the period's science fiction as they do onto *The Time Machine*. Wells was more cerebral than some of his magazine fiction contemporaries and more deliberately engaged with scientific thought than others. He therefore provides an unusually large amount of fodder for the argument I have been making. One respect in which *The Time Machine* is unusual is that it engages with the future at all. The preponderance of fin de siècle science fiction, including most of Wells's 1890s oeuvre, was set within a few years of its date of authorship, and one of the great misconceptions about science fiction in general is that it necessarily engages with futurity.⁴³ That *The Time Machine* is a rare exception makes it a convenient example; its unwaning resonance within the canon of later science fiction tales makes it a significant one. There are other ways, though, even other temporal ways, in which periodicals and science fiction support each other, and a study of a different 1890s text might instead reflect on these connections. A contemporary setting, after all, only emphasises a narrative's cognitive work of estrangement, its periodical situation in the present tense.

Despite the fact that *The Time Machine* is in some respects an unusual specimen, my reading of it nevertheless sheds considerable light on the fact that science fiction emerged out of Victorian periodicals. Nascent science fiction was able to articulate itself through the serial space of the magazine, but this was not just a one-way process since editors relied on developing forms of genre writing to finesse the similar-yet-different variety of content which was the basis of their commercial success. In this manner, periodicals and science fiction fed each other—reflecting common histories, embodying shared conceptions of temporality, and revealing a deep engagement with science writing.

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NOTES

1. Ashley, *The Time Machines*, 4; Moskowitz, *Science Fiction by Gaslight*, 15–50. On the emergence of the term “science fiction,” see Stableford, Clute, and Nicholls, “Definitions of SF.”
2. Brake, *Print in Transition*, 16.
3. However, Steven McLean points out in his recent study that “it would, indeed, be difficult to understate the role of the periodical press in shaping the fortunes of the young Wells.” McLean, *The Early Fiction of H. G. Wells*, 1.

4. Smith, *The Journalism of H. G. Wells*. For expansion on this point, see Tattersdill, "Review."
5. Ashley, *The Age of the Storytellers*, 1.
6. For instance, these are the three writers whose names are subheadings in chapter 1 of Bould and Vint, *The Routledge Concise History of Science Fiction*, 1–19.
7. See Luckhurst, *Science Fiction*, 16–17.
8. Bernstein, "Periodical Partners," 391.
9. Clute and Stableford, "H. G. Wells."
10. Nicholls and Langford, "Time Machine."
11. The most famous late nineteenth-century example of this is probably Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward: 2000–1887* (1888).
12. Clute, "Club Story."
13. Turner, "Periodical Time in the Nineteenth Century," 192–93.
14. Wells, "The Time Machine," 98. All emphases quoted in my essay are from the original.
15. *Ibid.*, 99.
16. Brake and Demoor, *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism*, 445.
17. Wells, "The Time Machine," 98.
18. The January 1895 *New Review* can be read online by those with access to ProQuest's *British Periodicals II*, although at the time of writing Wells's contributions had been redacted for copyright reasons.
19. Some characters are also changed: Filby is no longer described as a poet, and the Rector has been replaced with a "Very Young Man." There is also the addition of a "Provincial Mayor." Wells, *The Time Machine*, 1–7.
20. Wells, "The Time Machine," 100.
21. Turner, "Time, Periodicals, and Literary Studies," 311.
22. Zangwill, "Without Prejudice," 153.
23. *Ibid.*, 154.
24. *Ibid.*
25. See, for instance, McLean, *The Early Fiction of H. G. Wells*, 11–40.
26. Wells, "The Time Machine," 456.
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Ibid.*, 579.
29. *Ibid.*, 584.
30. *The Pall Mall Gazette* printed fourteen of Wells's articles in 1893 alone. See Smith, *The Journalism of H. G. Wells*, 76–77.
31. Wells, "The Time Machine," 586–87.
32. The definitive biography of Wells is Smith, *H. G. Wells: Desperately Mortal*. For extensive discussion of science in Wells's early writings, see McLean, *The Early Fiction of H. G. Wells*.
33. My point about a contemporary audience's lack of plot foreknowledge is slightly complicated by the prior publication of *The Chronic Argonauts*

(*Science Schools Journal*, April–June 1888), in which Wells rehearsed many of the ideas which would eventually make their way into *The Time Machine*. This earlier work, however, was never concluded—a danger of the modern serial format’s qualities of suspense familiar to today’s television viewers.

34. Levine, *The Serious Pleasures of Suspense*, 3.
35. *Ibid.*, 8.
36. For more on the links between Victorian science and periodical reading, see Dawson, “Literary Megatheriums and Loose Baggy Monsters.”
37. Levine, *The Serious Pleasures of Suspense*, 47.
38. Suvin, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction*, 7–8. Suvin’s definition, though influential, is frequently questioned, especially on the grounds of elitism. See Luckhurst, “The Many Deaths of Science Fiction,” 39.
39. Wells, “The Time Machine,” 102.
40. Levine, *The Serious Pleasures of Suspense*, 9.
41. Cox and Forshaw, *Why Does $E=mc^2$* , xv–xvi.
42. Wells, “The Time Machine,” 584.
43. See Nicholls and Langford, “Prediction.”

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